

*I thought you might like this
Mr. Lumsday is almost poetic.*

A MASTER CRAFTSMAN

Sister Titus, Members of the family; relatives and friends; brothers and sisters. The understatement of these service will be, "I am most kindly honored to occupy this position today." I acknowledge the generosity of the family in extending this cherished kindness to me.

If I were commissioned to speak for thousands of sportsmen this world over today, I am sure it would be an expression of love. But, inasmuch as I have not been asked to represent them, I will assume that right anyway.

I pray now for devine promptings to assist me in expressing that which will serve to relieve your spiritual depression, and afford you a strong promotion of faith. I seek for inspiration, that I might be blessed with having access to your minds.

If I had been blessed with an adequate amount of intelligence, seven years ago, I would have built a warehouse and filled it full of Bliss Titus Rifle Barrels, and today I would have been a wealthy man, but I suppose that is rather mercenary, and besides, I don't need a warehouse full of rifle barrels, because I know Bliss Titus.

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Seven years ago, I was fortunate enough to receive an assignment from my company to set up shop and housekeeping here in this beautiful crevasse. Mother Nature has sculptured from the tops of the mountains. During my seven years here, I have become acquainted with the Salt of the Earth. Not by worthiness, but by exposure. My friend, Bliss Titus, was and is some of that salt.

If he were here today, and I am not so sure that he isn't, I am sure that he would not take kindly to me overstating his case, and not having an autobiography of him, I am confined to express that which I found to be the character and individual - BLISS TITUS - not what someone else found, just what I found.

Bliss Titus was a master craftsman, an artist in the field of limited colleagues. Attaining a position of renown, not prematurely, but far in advance of most artists because most artists work rarely becomes recognized until after their demise, but not so with Bliss Titus. For he has long been celebrated as the Master Rifle Barrel Maker by experts for many years this world over, and his passing reduces that elite and distinguished group to a mere five in number. Not

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that there are so few rifle barrel makers, but so few who devised their own techniques; introduced a different style, and patterned their own steel consistencies, which have never been surpassed even by all our modern technology.

I found something extremely rare in Bliss Titus. A quality that is seldom attained or acquired by most mortals. He was a dedicated perfectionist in his skill. A skill which required the rigors of the outer realm of disciplin. Schooled to never produce almost perfect products or just about precise instruments, in his manual occupation, but to release only accurate and completely flawless merchandise, and that for a very important reason, because it bore his name.

I suppose that I aggravated him more than anyone else with my untimely intrusions to his work shop, but for a truly natural reason and purpose, you see, I was gravitated to him, and loved him, for I love to be in the presence of a master, especially while he is working.

He was a master because his accomplishments reached far above his contemporaries. He was a master because he could pursue his work alone, and did not depend upon the genius of others or the strict by-laws of some organized labor fraternity. He was his own genius, and his own organizer.

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So proficient that he was constantly called upon by major producers in his own line as a consultant. So adept he could have looked down at his competitors with skilled justification, but being a master, he recognized their plight and reached out and viewed them from eye level. The true measure of his mastery is that some twenty odd years after he set his course in this undisputed art, he has brought his most envious critics and jealous competitors around to his opinion, and they now honor his judgment. No accomplished artist has ever attained a position of greatness by working with his hands alone. Greatness is acquired by having an inspired, fertile mind, a mind which receives revelation and spawns with visions, then transmits those inspired promptings to the limbs or voice where the blue print of the mind is carried out in every minute detail, harnessing the powers, as it were, of creation. For out of the metal rods with which he worked, "grew escarpment that deny the need of wings."

His master works were merely the mirrored reflections of his unique character, for no flaws were there either, for there was nothing artificial or synthetic, nothing translucent to see through, but a genuine man of integral qualities seldom acquired.

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I now look forward with unreserved anticipation for that day when I might be honored with the sacred privilege of being ushered in once again to the presence of this most kind and gracious friend of mine, where I might enjoy a much longer association than this narrow corridor of life has allowed.

May God bless us all to so direct our daily efforts that we will be delivered from the death in which there is no hope of life, and from that night to which there comes no morning, and we may have the hallowed honor of this master's company and that of his master, I pray.

Lucy L. Hummel